

LONDON, MARCH 18, 1852.

Lord Derby has not ventured to repeat the experiment made by Sir Robert Peel in requiring the ladies of the Queen's household to be dismissed. The Duchess of Sutherland (Mistress of the Robes) has resigned, and has been succeeded by the Duchess of Argyll—the Mistress of the Robes being the only lady attached to the royal household whose office is vacated on a change of Ministry. This is undoubtedly a small business; but yet, upon the Queen's refusing to change the ladies of her household in 1839, when Sir Robert Peel was forming a new administration, that gentleman declined the task, and the Melbourne Ministry was re-instated in power. The new Ministers, who resigned their seats in Parliament upon taking office, have all been re-elected without opposition by their previous constituencies, with the exception of Lord Naas, who has been succeeded in the county of Kildare by a staunch freetrader. This is not, however, any proof of the popularity of the new Cabinet, for eight of its members have been re-elected by constituencies numbering in the aggregate only 4,804 electors, being a fifth part only of the number of electors represented by Lord John Russell, and an eighth of those represented by Mr. Cobden—a very striking proof of the necessity for a fair apportionment of the elective franchise.

The proceedings in Parliament have been very interesting, and continue to excite much attention.

On Friday night Lord Lyndhurst called the consideration of the House of Lords to the serious interruption which a dissolution of Parliament would cause the progress of public and private bills, and moved for a return of the private bills now pending before the House. He protested against the agitation which was being carried on to produce such dissolution. "He had no hesitation in saying that any one who pressed on a dissolution was indifferent as to the best interests of the country." The new Lord Chancellor then entered into a statement, pledging the Cabinet to carry out the greater part of the great measures of law reform which the late Administration had given notice of. Lord Brougham expressed his satisfaction at what the Lord Chancellor had stated.

In the House of Commons Lord John Russell stated that as a private member of Parliament he could not hope to pass the bill for a reform in the parliamentary representation which he had introduced; he should therefore abandon it, but he should not preclude himself from moving a general resolution on the subject in the course of the session. The bill for the disfranchisement of St. Albans was then read a second time on the motion of Mr. Walpole, the new Secretary for the Home Department.

On Monday, in the House of Lords, Lord Beaumont asked Lord Derby to declare distinctly whether or not it was the intention of the Government to recommend an alteration of the present policy with regard to the importation of corn, as soon as a new Parliament could be assembled. Lord Derby, in reply, denied that there was any greater necessity for the solution of the free-trade question now than before the accession to power of the present Government. He thought that the appeal to the people should be made as speedily as was consistent with the great interests of the country, but said that "neither taunts, nor calumnies, nor mortifications would induce him to recommend a dissolution one moment sooner than he thought it expedient." He denounced the operations of the anti-corn law league, complained warmly of the attempt which recently had been made by Lord John Russell to organize an opposition to his government, and thus force a dissolution. He denied the right of Parliament to put and decline to answer categorical questions as to the precise future course of the Government; but he would say that he would never attempt, by a mere majority of votes, to force upon the country a measure distasteful to the great body of the people. He called upon the House to enable him to carry into effect the various important measures which had been begun this session, and predicted that any factions opposition to Government which might be made in the other House would be visited by the country upon the heads of the authors. Earl Grey denied the late Government from the strictures of the noble Earl, and expressed his dissatisfaction with the evasive and indirect answer which he had given to the question which had been asked him.

In the House of Commons Mr. Tuffnell, gave notice of a motion to bring in a bill for abolishing the property qualification for members of Parliament; Mr. Bessell of a bill to establish vote by ballot; Mr. L. King of a bill to assimilate the county franchise and mode of voting with those of boroughs; and Mr. Trevelyan a motion adverse to charter rates. Sir John Pakington stated that it was not the intention of the Government to interfere in any way with the reduction of the duty on sugar, which was under operation on the 5th of July next. Mr. D'Israeli said that the Government had no intention to propose a tax upon coal. Mr. C. Villiers inquired of Ministers whether they intended to reverse the commercial policy of the country by imposing a duty upon imported corn? He called for a distinct avowal of the views of the Government upon this subject, both now and in the event of a dissolution of Parliament. In the debate which followed, we regard the future policy of the Government as being shadowed forth, though rather dimly, we allow. The remarks of Sir James Graham and those of Mr. Gladstone show the decided views of Sir Robert Peel's friends upon the question of taxing corn. The reformers are united to a man in opposition to the Government. The only doubtful body is the Irish members. But upon this point we think they would unite with the Whigs, the Reformers, and the Peelites against a return to a duty upon corn. If this be so, then, upon a division on this question, in the present House, Ministers could not count upon more than 250 supporters; whilst in a full House 408 would be united against them; and we do not think that the members would be materially altered by a general election.

There was nothing of importance in the proceedings of either House on Tuesday or Wednesday. The Times says that Lord Derby's speech on Monday was "one of those examples of eloquence which, in a practical age, the rarest emergencies only call forth." The Times thus continues: "The policy announced by the new Premier is precisely that which we have described as the one most required by the interests of the country, and most suitable to the very peculiar circumstances under which Lord Derby has been forced into power. Nothing whatever has occurred of a nature to compel or induce his Lordship and his friends to depart from their determination, long since expressed, to take no further steps in the matter of protection during the present Parliament. That was, and that is still, we must say, a very plain, a very allowable, and even a praiseworthy policy. There is no ambiguity, and certainly no concealment about it."

At length the fate of the Crystal Palace is decided. Lord John Manners, in reply to a question proposed to him on Tuesday in the House of Commons, stated that Government did not intend to take any step for preserving it beyond the 1st of May next. It is stated that the amount of funds in the hands of the Royal Commissioners for carrying out the Great Exhibition of last year is to be expended in the erection of a new National Gallery at Kensington. The Daily News takes great exception to this plan; more, however, we think, to the locality than to any thing else. In this new building all the pictures and statues capable of being removed are to be placed.

A late Parliamentary return states that on the 31st of December last the entire amount of capital and loans authorized by Parliament for the construction of railways in Great Britain and Ireland was £262,796,676.

The savings banks of this country, taken in the aggregate, are rapidly becoming institutions of great importance. At the end of 1850 the number of depositors in savings banks was 1,092,000; the amount deposited was £27,196,568. The depositors in 1848 and 1850 are thus classified:

	1848.	1850.	Increase.
Less than 20	636,420	677,969	41,549
Do. 20 to 40	240,683	251,131	10,448
Do. 40 to 100	102,053	106,510	4,457
Do. 100 to 200	34,644	35,692	1,048
Do. 200 to 500	18,539	18,914	375
Exceeding 500	2,617	2,448	- 169
	1,094,946	1,092,681	57,794

We think this return exhibits very forcibly the satisfactory condition and progress of the people. There is a good deal of dissatisfaction, however, as to the management of the funds of these savings banks. It is known that if the stocks in which these funds have been invested we would not, they would not realize within a million and a half sterling the amount invested, and any further depreciation in the price of stocks would increase this deficiency. The management of these institutions being in the hands of Government, it is liable, of course, to make the hands of Government, which would have to be borne by the good this deficiency, which would have to be borne by the public. A good deal of dissatisfaction is expressed at this state of things, and an improved system of management is loudly called for.

The weekly returns of the Bank of England show a decrease of circulation amounting to £288,990, and an increase of bullion £171,146; consequently an increase of £455,146 in the reserve; the entire amount of unemployable funds now £13,172,750. The public deposits are now £5,502,923 in preparation for the payment of the dividends, the circulation £20,237,320, and the bullion £19,410,070; the private deposits amount to £12,124,056, having increased nearly half a million sterling during last week. Money is, of course, plentiful and cheap. The consol market extremely firm. Hopes are beginning to be entertained that the Government will shrink from paralyzing the commerce of the country by any attempt at a reversal of the free-trade policy.

The aspect of French affairs is also considered more satisfactory; the engagement of the French people in public works of magnitude and measures of industrial amelioration being regarded as a security against the indulgence of any policy antagonistic to a friendly state of international relations.

The accounts from the Continental stock markets state that the conversion of the French five per cent. rentes into four and a half per cent. stock had produced a favorable effect upon prices. All descriptions had advanced, and speculation was decidedly in favor of purchasing.

The corn market in wheat since last week. The produce market is very dull; cotton alone seems steady. The quantity received into Great Britain from the United States this year exceeds that of last year, and the total supply is ahead of last year's. Business, however, continues active in the manufacturing districts, and the demand is large.

There is little novelty in Literature. "Deak House" has had the largest sale of any of Mr. Dickens's serials so far. The first impression of twenty-five thousand copies was swept up by the trade at once; twenty thousand were put to press immediately after, which have been nearly disposed of. Take the whole calculation, there is £1,000 a month from this source alone, saying nothing of the value of the copyright. "Memoirs of the Whig Party during my Time," by HENRY LORD ROLLAND, edited by HENRY EDWARD LORD ROLLAND, is the name of a posthumous volume of personal title-tattle just issued. The volume contains a note to the effect that the late Lord ROLLAND bequeathed to Lord John Russell ample materials for a "Life of Fox," with an injunction that he would set to work upon them. The sale of the library of the late King, Louis Philippe, is now going on in Paris; it is expected to last for about a month. It is particularly rich in manuscripts and poems of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; amongst the most precious is the famous romance of *Peregrine*, the only copy existing, and which is expected to sell for upwards of ten thousand francs. The fourth annual report of the London Asylum for Idiots shows the encouraging state of that most excellent institution. There were one hundred and forty-one patients in 1851.

In the system of treatment pursued, physical training occupies the first place; bathing, shampooing, and gymnastic exercises being carefully attended to. Reading, writing, figures, natural and scripture history, singing, drawing, and music are all taught; and the remarkable and encouraging fact is recorded that in each of these branches of education progress is discernible. There are also classes for gardeners, carpenters, shoemakers, basket-makers, butchers, and netters, and the examples which are exhibited in these departments are extremely interesting and full of promise. The results realized are thus recorded in the report of last year: Among those placed under the care of the board from the commencement there were twenty-five unable to walk, one hundred and fourteen unable to feed, dress, or take care of their persons; twenty epileptic, seventy-two paralyzed, sixty-eight dumb, and twenty-five under nine years of age. Of these six have been taught to walk, and fourteen much improved; twenty-seven, who were dumb or made strange and unmeaning noises, were mastering articulate sounds and beginning to speak; forty-eight had been taught to feed and dress themselves, and to observe clean habits; twenty-three had been enabled to read, twenty-seven to write, eleven to cipher, and sixteen to draw. Some were taught music, nearly all singing and gymnastic exercises, and many were enabled to attend domestic and about fifty public worship.

The report, which is a very remarkable document, states that order has been secured, that good habits prevail, that the health of the inmates has undergone a sensible improvement, and that they are extremely happy. The results of this charity have naturally been received by the friends of the charity as an omen of further success, and a stimulus to greater exertions. Their efforts are now, therefore, directed to the formation of a building fund, and to those facilities for classification which the effective treatment of idiosyncrasy so essentially necessary. The promoters of the charity seek to raise £10,000; upwards of £4,000 were subscribed at the anniversary dinner, and the entire amount will be readily raised. Much more may be done to better the condition of the unfortunate class who are the objects of this charity than has hitherto been imagined, and this institution will no doubt be enabled to successfully carry out this most interesting and benevolent experiment.

There is very little news from the Continent. The decree for the conversion of the French five per cent. has caused much surprise and great activity in the money market. The total amount to be converted from five per cent. to 4½ is equal to be about £145,000,000; of course the annual saving will be about £720,000. The policy of the measure has not been disputed, since it is one which should have been taken years ago by Louis Philippe; but the mode in which it has been concocted and announced has met with nothing but condemnation. This continued use of the "one-man power" is beginning to be very much reprehended. If the national obligations of France are to be speedily and suddenly dealt with by arbitrary decrees, it is seen that the future position of her creditors must depend greatly not only on the conscientiousness of the individual from whom these decrees proceed, but also upon his financial judgment. Hence, so far from the measure having created the confidence that would otherwise have arisen from it, it has among many persons tended to increase the previous distrust, although its immediate effects must necessarily be to produce a rise in all descriptions of securities. A recognition of the artifice by which up to the last moment the public were led to believe that no such step was contemplated has also contributed to this feeling.

It is expected, however, that the terms offered, of either paying off at par or conversion into new rentes at 4½ per cent., will be accepted. The accounts of revenue for the month of February are very encouraging. They show an increase of nearly two millions of francs, as compared with February, 1851. A great mass of capital in France is certainly seeking investment; hence the extraordinary rise in French railway shares. There is a rumor of a decree about to be issued which will formally prohibit any court of law from questioning the legality of any decree made by the President since December the 2d.

The assertion that the Orleans Princes have made a fusion with the elder branch of the Bourbons is again very generally repeated. The following is said to be the basis of this agreement:

"The national flag is to be such as it was adopted by the sections of '89, namely, tri-colored, quartered with fleurs de lis. The reign of Louis Philippe is to be recognized for the eighteen years during which it lasted. As preliminary acts, the Duke de Nemours is to go to Prohord to pay an official visit to the Count de Chambord. The Count de Chambord is to go to Paris, either in London or at Naples, his homage to Queen Marie Amelie."

It is said that the Comte de Chambord has written to a confidential agent in Paris to prevent Legitimists from

men deputies from taking the oath to the new constitution and Louis Napoleon. Hence, all Legitimists who become definitive deputies are to be regarded as decided Bonapartists. The others will resign. The deputies will not be allowed, it appears, to choose their seats, so as to mark the various shades of opposition, but will be placed alphabetically, or otherwise, as the board may determine.

M. CARNOT has been elected deputy of the Seine. This makes only the sixth election to the *Legislative Corps* in opposition to the President. M. BILLAULT has obtained a concession from the President that four short-hand writers are to be admitted to take a more extended report than a mere *procès verbal* of the proceedings of the Legislature; but, if the report is not to be published, this concession will not be worth much.

A review of sixty regiments of all arms, forming a total of one hundred thousand men, is to take place in the Champ-de-Mars on the 15th April. This will be the largest review in France since that at Bologna in 1804.

The ROTHENBURGS are said to have been the support upon which Louis NAPOLEON rested in his late financial movement; this accounts for the confidence with which the operation has been effected, and its first success. The dangerous side of this decree is the unlimited power assumed by the President to raise new loans without consulting the Legislature.

The social condition of France in the provinces is represented as most terrible. The actual number of paupers receiving relief from the Government is careful not to publish. It is, however, we believe, admitted to be 1,200,000, but is thought to be nearer 3,500,000. In Paris, in 1847, there were 181,000 persons receiving charitable assistance. M. VILLEMAIRY gives a list of several towns in which the paupers vary from one-fourth to one-sixth of the total number of inhabitants. The *Westminster Review*, January, 1851, gives the following conjectural classification of the population, which we fear is not very wide of the mark:

Millions.	
Rich men.....	200,000
In easy circumstances.....	650,000
In moderate circumstances.....	4,200,000
Gaining a decent but uncertain subsistence.....	6,000,000
Living in extreme indigence.....	6,000,000
Paupers, thieves, and prostitutes.....	4,000,000
	36,000,000

Whether these figures be exactly correct or not is of comparatively little importance, but there is no question as to the indigence and consequent restless discontent of at least half of the population. As long as this state of things continues no Government, however strong and merciful, can put down Socialism. Alas for *la Belle France*! Must she forever be the prey of either anarchy or despotism? The latter is now in the ascendant, but a terrible alternation may be near at hand.

There is no news from either SPAIN or PORTUGAL, and very little from ITALY. Three new Cardinals are about being created at ROME. The Jesuits have established a college at Velletri. The news from PIEDMONT is, that Turin and the passages of the Po are about being fortified. SARDINIA is busily employed constructing railways, and establishing a liberal commercial system. She has now treaties of reciprocity with nearly all the commercial nations of the world. Troubles and bad government appear to have deprived the bulk of the people of AUSTRIA, and Germany generally, of all heart or energy. They have left their fields uncultivated for miles, fearing that the rude hands of either a domestic or foreign soldiery should seize or destroy the fruits of their labor. The result of this is something like a famine.

The accounts from POLAND are most distressing. In the Carpathians people are literally starving. There is no bread at all. Similar accounts arrive from Posen, Westphalia, Greis, the Tyrol, Cassel, Neiderlaus, &c. With misery, crime and excess are frightfully increased, and something very nearly approaching to anarchy is raging in the districts most affected by the famine.

The only news from VIENNA is, that the Emperor has returned to that city. The Government denies that it encouraged France to occupy Switzerland. The Austrian *Lloyd*, which is supposed to express the sentiments of the Government, has the following upon the late Ministerial changes in England:

"From our point of view, a Tory Cabinet is better than a Whig one; but our wishes must not be confounded with our opinions. Lord Derby will fall. The Conservative party in England is now taking up a position which no Conservative party in any land can hold with honor. When the privilege of a large class of State is so ill-advised as to make laws which only serve their own interests, to the prejudice of the rest of the people, they are lost. Only the poor and their representatives have the right to be selfish; the rich ought never to make laws for filling their own pockets. While the Tories have been ruling, they may conquer; but when they write upon their banners the words, 'Dear bread, white wine, Peelite, and the sign of the cross,' they are only showing their own weakness. The result of the struggle between the two parties is, that the Tories, instead of the cheap bread of the manufacturer brings want and hunger to the agriculturist, and declare that the Whigs have built the prosperity of the towns on the ruin of the agricultural population. To this argument of the landlords there is, however, an answer; and agriculturists will prosper also. The war of protection is one between the millions of cities and—not the millions of the rural population, but a couple of thousand Tory landlords."

The time of the Prussian Chamber is now much taken up with debates on a subject only too familiar to Englishmen in connexion with Ireland, petitions for money-relief, or the institution of public works as a means of averting famine in East Prussia and some parts of Silesia. The corn harvest and potato crop have both failed; the former partially, the latter almost entirely.

There is very little news in the politics of PRUSSIA. The first Chamber has ratified a resolution in favor of voting the supplies for the ordinary budget of the State for a period of three years, instead of annually, as at present. Another resolution enables the Chamber to discuss the items of the budget, which now can only be accepted or rejected as a whole. This last resolution is undoubtedly an improvement, whatever the first may be. The Prince of PRUSSIA is showing his fondness for retrogressive measures; he congratulated a deputation from the first Chamber upon their recent reactionary votes, and impressed on them the necessity of increasing the army.

M. PIERRE, a deputy in the BELGIAN Chamber, stated in that assembly on the 5th instant the miserable condition of the people of LUXEMBOURG, where, he said, pauperism and desolation existed to a degree previously unknown. The total loss of the potato crops, the high price of grain, and the want of employment had concurred in producing this miserable state of things. The Government is doing what it can to alleviate the distress of the people. The citizens of Ghent have been amusing themselves with a masquerade, in which Louis NAPOLEON and his Parliament were caricatured by puppets. The French Minister at Brussels required an apology from the Government for this insult, which was not made; the application of the French Minister is said by a Belgian paper to have been *officious*, not *official*.

The people of Bale, in SWITZERLAND, have also been indulging themselves during their carnival frolics with shocking irreverence for the French President. The whole affair appears to have been arranged a week before hand, and the police carefully abstained from interfering. Application has been made by the French Government to the authorities at Bale for an apology. Independent of this trifling business, the last accounts from Switzerland are of the most satisfactory nature.

We have no further news from India relative to the expected hostilities with the Burmese. The intelligence from the Cape of Good Hope is of a much more hopeful character, and there is reason to believe that the next arrival from that colony will bring news of the complete submission of the Caffres.

MARCH 29.—Lord EOLINTON held his first levee at the Castle of Dublin on the 17th. The visitors exceeded 1,700; but it was remarked that not a single bishop or minor dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church was present.

A late letter from Berlin says: "The royal family have received invitations from the Emperor of Russia to be present at the solemnities to be observed at Moscow this year in honor of the thousandth anniversary of the foundation of the Russian empire. It is confidently expected that the King and Queen will visit the city, and that the Emperor will be present at Breslau next May in a royal palace on a reduced scale. The visits of so many enlightened Prussians to London last summer have brought

about a wonderful activity on the part of Government for the promotion of agricultural improvements. A great number of machines for the use of agriculture, which were purchased by the Government in London, are now being exhibited here, and there are to be cattle shows and exhibitions, wool in its various stages, flax from the earliest stalk to the latest form of improved linen, in various parts of the Kingdom. The Prussian exhibitors at the Crystal Palace, who have now got their articles returned unsold on their hands, are about to get up an exhibition of them here, in the hopes of catching customers for them when the Court is granted in the next month by the presence of so many august visitors."

The French budget, as announced by the President, is given in the *Moniteur* of yesterday. The total of credits for the ordinary service is one milliard one million. The civil list will be fixed by a *sensuous constitution*. The budget of the Ministry of War is increased seven millions, chiefly by transportation; that of Marine is increased twelve millions, chiefly by *peace settlements*. Nine millions are deducted for the saving on the dividend of the five per cents. The tax on drink is maintained. The entry duty into towns is reduced by half. The retail duty is augmented by half. The title raised by the Government on the octrois is suppressed.

A TURN paper states that the Austrian troops in TURKEY are about to be diminished by 2,000 men. The possibility of the withdrawal of the French army from Rome is also hinted at, with the understanding that a French garrison is to be permanently established at Civita Vecchia. The Emperor of AUSTRIA has recalled the ordinance by which the conscription law was extended to Trieste. This has been done after the mode of the President of France—by the *de facto* of the Emperor; none of his Ministers having been consulted. Truly, republican and imperial manners assimilate very closely in Europe!

The news from CONSTANTINOPLE (via Vienna) is, that a firman for the deposition of Abbas Pacha, Viceroy of Egypt, is preparing; we should be sorry to have this confirmed.

Yesterday's Parliamentary proceedings are unimportant. In the House of Lords the Lord Chancellor, and Lords Brougham, Cranworth, and Redesdale admitted the desirability of enfranchising copyholds, if it could be effected without injury to Lords of Manors and others. The Duke of NEWCASTLE postponed his inquiry into the policy of the Government until this day. In the Commons Mr. D'RYSCOURT gave notice of a bill to shorten the duration of Parliaments. Mr. HUME endeavored to obtain information whether Government would explain their financial plans before the end of the fiscal year, 5th of April, but in vain; the Chancellor of the Exchequer simply replying that due notice would be given of any financial statement he might think it his duty to make.

The Bank of England has declared a half-yearly dividend of four per cent. Buenos Ayres bonds have advanced from 57s. to 81s. during the week.

Paris Bourse last night: 5 per cents. 100c. 15c.; 3 per cents. 70c.; bank shares 2,600c.

London Stock Exchange, 8 o'clock P. M.—Consols, both for cash and account, 98½.

	Redeemable.	Price.
United States 5 per cent. bonds.....	1853.....	90 3/4
Do 6 per cent. bonds.....	1862.....	102 1/2
Do 6 per cent. do.....	1868.....	110 —
Do 6 do do 1867, 1868.....	107 1/2	108
New York State 5 per cents.....	1858, 1860.....	94 3/4
Prussian 5 per cent. stock.....	1851.....	81 1/2
Ohio 6 per cents.....	1870, 1875.....	105 —
Massachusetts 5 p. c. sterling bonds.....	1868.....	109 —
Maryland 5 per cent. do.....	1867.....	90 1/2
Virginia 6 per cent. bonds.....	1866.....	97 1/2
Canada 5 per cent. bonds.....	1874.....	107 —
Montreal city 6 per cents.....	1867, 1868.....	83 3/4
Philadelphia and Reading Railroad.....	1860.....	75 —
6 per cent. mortgage bonds.....	1860.....	78 7/8

FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

PARIS, MARCH 18, 1852.

The Swiss question, which during the last three weeks has been of threatening aspect for the peace of Europe, seems for the moment at least to be deprived of all its alarming features. The French note of the 24th January, of which I gave you the most notable portions in my last, is not persisted in, so at least report the Swiss journals, by the Government of the Prince Louis NAPOLEON. The *Debats* has just received from Berne and published the reply of the Swiss Federal Council to the dictatorial demands of this Government. It bears date the 9th February. After declaring that the Swiss Government had hitherto and would continue to exert all legal means at its disposal to suppress or prevent all hostile movement among the refugees within its borders against the peace of neighboring nations, it positively refuses to accede to the demands of the French Minister to be allowed to point out for instant expulsion from Switzerland such French refugees as he in his discretion might consider most dangerous to France. The honor and independence of the Swiss Confederation permit no other answer to be given to the French note. The law of nations sustains Switzerland in the position taken, and from this position, declares the Council, in conclusion, the threats of France will not avail to drive her. The reply of this Government to the Swiss note of the 9th ultimo has not been made public; but it is reported, as above intimated, to be of a pacific purport. By the way, I cannot forbear to place this now perfectly authenticated date of the French note (24th January) in juxtaposition with the terms of the official note dated 17th of February, and inserted in the *Moniteur* of the 18th February. That notice was intended to quiet public alarms and stop the rumors of war that then prevailed. The notice says: "Since the 2d December the French Government has not addressed any sort of demand to foreign Powers, except to Belgium, with a view to induce her to prevent the organization within her bounds of a system of incessant attacks. Not a soldier more has been armed, not a general review has been passed; in fine, this Government has done nothing that could excite in the least the susceptibility of our neighbors." You will acknowledge now that it was not without reason that I intimated at the time my want of confidence in the veracity of that official statement in particular, and of similar statements emanating from this Government in general.

The Opposition in Paris has just triumphed by the election of CARNOT as deputy to the Legislative body. The most important official act of this week is a decree of the President, under date of the 14th instant, reducing the interest payable on the public debt of France from five to four and a half per cent. This proceeding is justified in the report of the Minister of Finances, which, as is usual in such cases, precedes the decree by the example of England, which between the years 1822 and 1844 reduced the interest on its national debt from five to three per cent.; of Prussia, which in 1842 made a similar reduction from four to three and a half per cent.; and of Belgium, which reduced its interest in 1844 from five to four and a half per cent. It is also stated that since the Bank of France has just reduced its interest from four to three per cent., and the Government can negotiate loans for less than five, there appears to be no good reason why it should continue to pay more than four and a half.

The only other decree of note is one by which the President has adopted a new formula for judicial documents. Hitherto it has been the custom (since the Republic) to head all such documents "IS THE NAME OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE." But hereafter they are to be issued in the President's own name, and to commence thus: "Louis NAPOLEON, President of the French Republic, to all present and to come, greeting!" This is more personal, more princely, more like a *coup d'etat*, and, above all, more imperial.

A decree is looked for every day fixing the budget, or at least the civil list, for the current year. Properly speaking, this should be submitted to the Legislature; but the President seems resolved that every thing important shall be done in advance by special decree; and the last article of the constitution expressly provides that all such decrees issued before the complete organization of the Government shall have the force of laws. It is supposed that the civil list will be about 6,000,000 francs, or \$1,200,000; which is about the same amount which was granted to Louis Philippe. The civil list will only include a portion of the national forests, such as Marly, St. Germain, and perhaps Rambouillet.

The Minister of the Interior has addressed a circular to the Prefects of the several departments as to the organization of the new National Guard. Its chief peculiarities are that the Government is to determine the exact number of citizens which is to compose the service, and on what occasions they are to be called out; and that they are to be selected (by a special committee appointed by the Government in each district) from those persons, between the ages of 25 and 50, who are best known for their devotedness to the cause of order as understood by Louis NAPOLEON.

The works which have been going on for some months past for the improvement and decoration of the Tuilleries are nearly completed. The aim throughout has been to restore the palace to its condition when occupied by "my uncle." The Prince President is resolved to have every thing about him imperial. He must hulk on an imperial sofa, preside at an imperial board, eat from imperial plates, be served by imperial servants, tread an imperial carpet, and sleep on an imperial couch. It is his weakness. He likes to be environed by imperial upholstery. He would fain see his princely features—alas, sadly unimpaired by the Emperor's—reflected in an imperial mirror. All this, fortunately, is easy to accomplish. Sofas, and tables, and mirrors, of any shape, can be had for the ordering; and even this, to a nation which thinks so much of types and is so devoted to shadows, is something. But the ambition of the imperial nephew, to do him justice, soars higher than all this. He would really be every inch an emperor. And so, for the word signifies monopoly and concentration of power, he is so now. The outward form and name of the thing will come in time; and from present appearances the time is not far off. What circumstances, interior or exterior, may influence it, no one can tell. As for the people, they are neither prepared nor unprepared for it. The Constitutionnel is right in saying that after the recent votes they are ready to accept whatever may be done. Or, if they are not ready to accept, they certainly show little disposition to oppose. Meanwhile the organization of the Government as provided by the constitution goes on rapidly. The opening of the Legislature is to take place on the 29th. The inaugurating ceremonies, it is said, are to be celebrated at the Tuilleries, in the Hall of the Marshes. The members of the Senate, of the Corps Legislatif, and of the Council of State, convoked on the occasion, will take their oath of fidelity to the Constitution and to the President, who will be there to receive it personally. To render the scene still more solemn, and give to it the necessary eclat, it will be preceded by a grand mass, and all the services will be performed in the presence of the Diplomatic corps, the Magistracy, and all the high functionaries, and dignitaries of the State. The regular sessions of the Senate are to be held in the Palace of the Luxembourg, while the other branch of the Legislature will meet in the Palais Bourbon, which is now ready for their reception, and has just had inscribed upon it the words *Corps Legislatif* in letters of gold. Nearly all the members of the corps have already chosen their seats upon the principle of "first come, first served." The old divisions of right, left, centre, mountain, &c. will not be permitted; and the little handful of members constituting the opposition will be scattered about the house, like stray sheep.

What is to be the fate of this legislative body, and how long there will be harmony among its members, is a problem I shall not attempt to solve. But as a French writer has observed, with commendable caution, that "nearly all men are human," it is highly probable that, unless the deputies elect are to be classed among men not human, we may anticipate some amusing scenes. Indeed, without such scenes, no French Assembly, whatever its politics, could not long exist. A straightforward business-like Legislature is not—to use a French mode of expression—in the habitudes or the traditions of the people. It was a wise precaution, therefore, on the part of the Government to provide against any possible indiscretions being reported. In fact, saving the dry record of the official clerk, nothing is to be reported; and, so far as the Government, can manage it, nothing is to be said. It is a common remark among the people (who, after all, will talk) that the members are to have their mouths sewed up; but, if so, they may find some consolation in the fact that the same operation is to be performed on the people's ears. To sum up the case clearly, nothing is to be said, and nobody is to hear it.

It would almost appear, too, that nothing is to be done. At least this idea would seem to be conveyed in the following sentence, from the *Moniteur* of the 17th:

"There will be nothing in the debates of the Corps Legislatif to inflame party spirit. This is evident from the simple fact that, during this session at least, the simple law of any importance will be submitted to its deliberation. The deputies of the Corps Legislatif will have to occupy themselves only with laws affecting material interests and plans for increasing the general prosperity. We repeat, that in such matters there will be no motive for retrogressive agitation; and if, in the absence of real motives, any one under vain pretences seeks to produce such disorders as can disturb the public sentiment outside, that will be a scandal which the wisdom and the firmness of the Assembly will not allow to be renewed. Let the old parliamentary habits, then, be abandoned, and let the deputies, without exception, be penetrated with this truth, that, in the spirit of the present constitution, their only mission is to concur with the Executive power, loyally and peacefully, in all measures which can give to the country, for the present and the future, calm and security."

The eagle is of course the only bird recognized now in the political oratory of the country. At the Palais Bourbon, the Luxembourg, the Tuilleries, at Versailles, St. Cloud, and in fact wherever Louis Napoleon and his satellites are to be seen, it is found, like *Roe's raven*, "ever, ever, ever," and, for the education of smaller birds which just now are flitting between the Champs Elysees and Gardens of the Tuilleries, four colossal eagles in white marble, (by Ca. Tellier,) which have been placed in the atteliers of the Government ever since the Emperor Louis XVI. (late Pont de la Concordance,) in face of the Corps Legislatif.

Speaking of eagles, a worthy *modiste* in the Place Vendome, wishing to be thoroughly *a la mode*, and having an eye perhaps to the Princess Mathilde, who is about to occupy a mansion in the place, ornamented her shop window a few weeks since with an eagle which would have done credit to any housekeeper in Paris. For several nights an invisible hand (so say the papers) mischievously defaced the thing